



Korn Gallery

Dorothy Young Center for the Arts
Drew University
Madison, NJ 07940

Return Service Requested

Ryan Burns

"Climate Proxies"

curated by Margaret Kuntz and Gabriele Hiltl-Cohen

February 4 - March 5, 2014

Opening Reception:

February 7, 2014, 5:30 - 7:30 PM

Gallery Hours:

Tuesday - Friday 12:30 - 4:00 PM

Selected weekends and by appointment

For more information please call (973) 408 - 3758

www.drew.edu/korngallery

Untitled, (Slash Pine, estimated age 77 years)

Hurricane Katrina, 2005, City Park, Orleans Parish, New Orleans, Louisiana

Mixed media, 58 x 49 inches 2007

Oregon artist makes impression at Korn

West Coast artist Ryan Burns' work sparks "green" conversation at Drew

TAYLOR TRACY
Assistant Student Life & Arts Editor

Many Drewids remember the devastation Superstorm Sandy left in its wake, whether it was on the news or in their backyards, and it's possible that climate change will increase the occurrences of similar storms in the future.

Ryan Burns, an artist from Oregon, explores the impact of human activity on global climate and how hurricanes and superstorms affect trees in his latest artistic project.

Six of these large-scale multimedia pieces are currently being shown on campus in an exhibit called "Climate Proxies," curated by Gallery Coordinator Gabrielle Hiltl-Cohen and Assistant Professor of Art History Dr. Margaret Kuntz.

Each piece is a collage of maps, landscapes and other images superimposed with a black drawing of a tree's cross-section.

According to the exhibit's official press release, the work in the exhibit "documents the annihilation of ancient forest habitat...His work also addresses the role of deforestation and fossil fuel emissions in climate change."

When asked what it's like having the work of an artist from across the country in the gallery, Hiltl-Cohen said, "He brings us work that depicts, for instance, a large redwood oak that is found only on the West coast. Com-

paring it to the East coast trees included in the exhibition lets one think and imagine about the variety and magnitude of nature. His use of collage adds unity to the work."

In order to reach the sites serving as the inspiration for this series, Burns drove an old ambulance running on vegetable oil.

Hiltl-Cohen described as "Burns making an ironical statement by driving a 'help' vehicle to find trees that have been damaged in superstorms ignited by climatic changes."

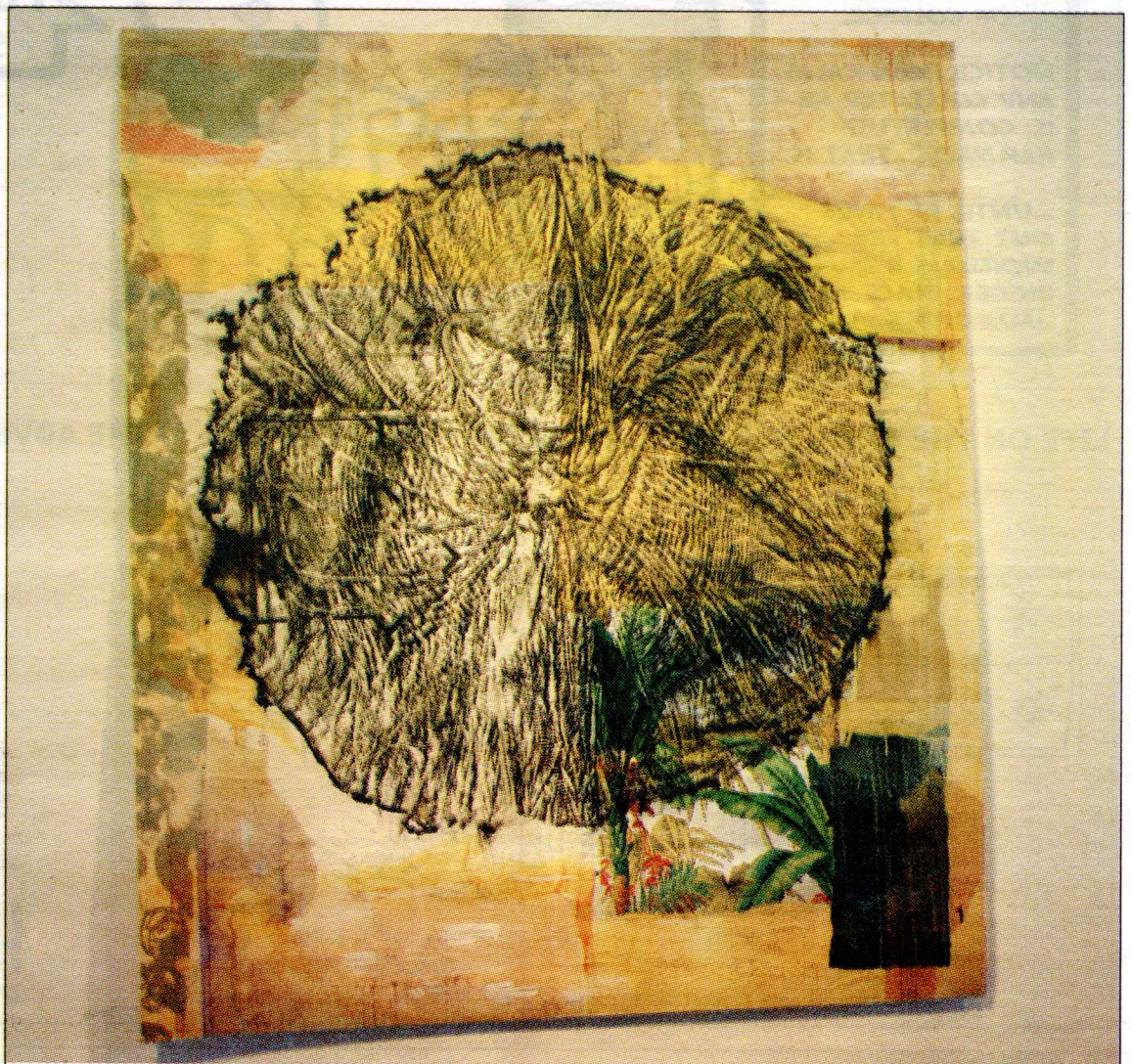
Burns' work sparks both artistic and environmental interest.

Kelsie Kolb ('15), a double major in environmental science and chemistry, said, "My first reaction to Burns' work was that it looks destroyed...It seems as though the charred and dead-looking tree ring is marring the real piece of art, which is the beautiful landscape and scenery behind it."

Greta Baresich ('16), a studio art major, also described her initial reaction to Burns' work, but focused on its aesthetic properties.

She said, "I feel like Burns really dove into the feeling of the environmental issue. You can tell by the materials and the detail he went into them."

Jaime Ballesteros ('14), an art history major, offered a slightly different perspective. He explained, "I think these works bring to light many of our concerns and add nuanced perspectives...to the current dialogue on environmental issues."



MARLEY CRANK / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

In a large-scale collage, artist Ryan Burns' manifests climate change through detail and layering.

Because of their subject matter and size, Burns' art sparks curiosity and insight into the contemporary debate on environmental concerns as well as the fusion of art and science.

Kolb noticed this fusion, connecting it to the work in "Climate Proxies." About the relationship between art and science, she said, "Deep down, art and science are really not all that different... I personally feel that art is more

universal than science...After a storm here, our campus looks a lot like one of Burns' paintings. I think Burns' works have a way of personally introducing us firsthand to the effects of climate change in a way that we can all relate to, more so than perhaps a journal article on the effects of climate change."

Baresich noted, "It reflects larger social concerns." She explained that contemporary

art reaches our generation on a personal level because it offers a modern and interesting perspective on well-known issues. She added, "Someone who strongly believes in the environment will have a personal connection with his artwork."

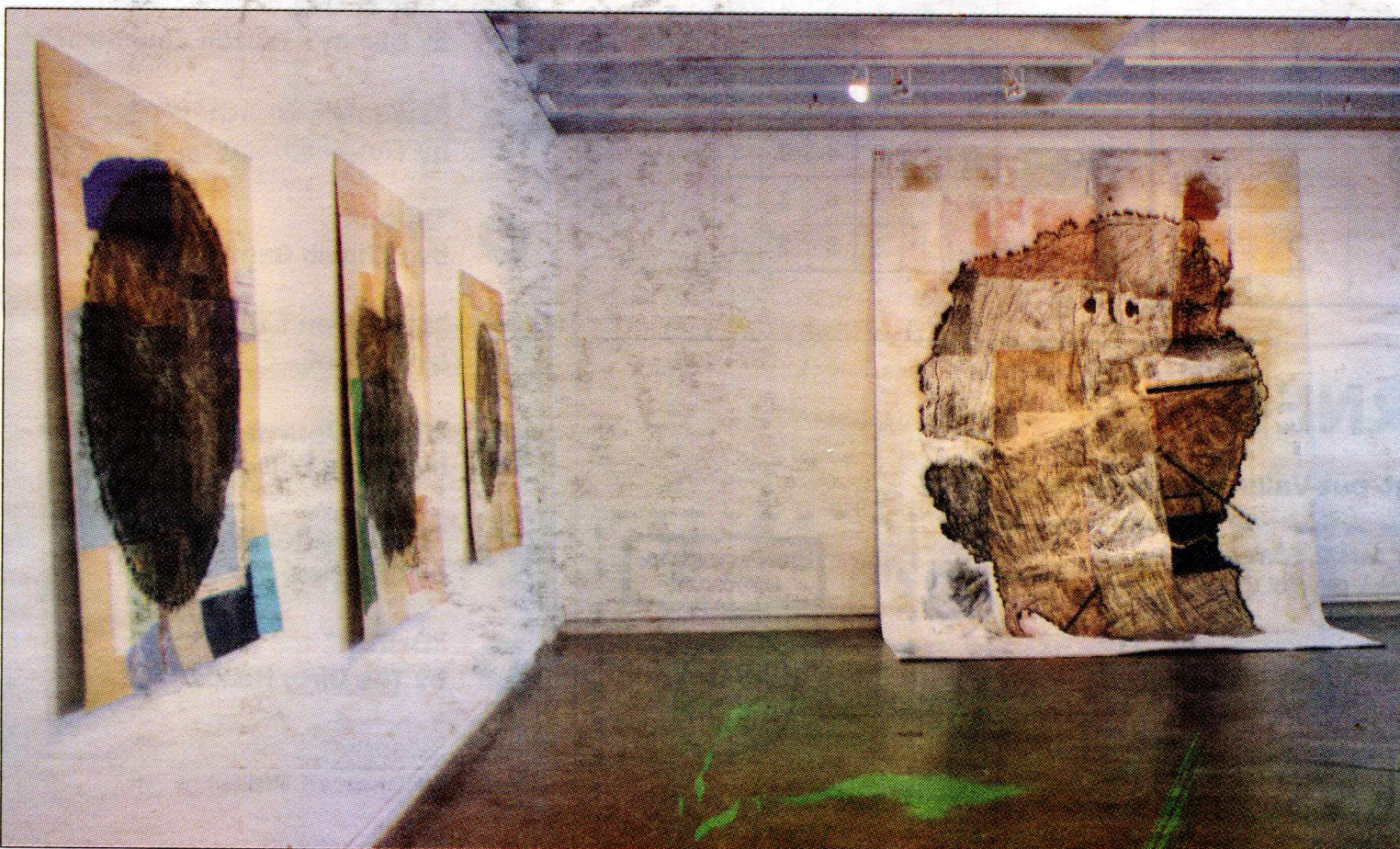
The potential influence of Burns' work, especially for Drewids, is also apparent. Ballesteros noted opportunities for Burns' work to impact a variety of groups on campus.

He said, "Students within our art department have created works that have been influenced by environmental issues, so having Burns' work on campus will serve as a resource and inspiration...In terms of the broader campus community, I think Burns' work will serve as a conversation starter."

Kolb, from Toms River, saw the destruction of superstorm Sandy firsthand. She explained how Burns' work affected her personally and helped her see the issue of climate change in a new way.

She said, "I take a lot of science classes at Drew...I think sometimes I forget to take a step back and to look at the bigger picture. Sometimes it's really nice to view an issue and the world from a different perspective and to just feel without overanalyzing. Burns' work did that for me."

"Climate Proxies" is on view in the Korn Gallery in the Dorothy Young Center for the Arts until March 5. The gallery is open 12:30-4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.



MARLEY CRANK / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Four art pieces in the "Climate Proxies" exhibit reveal the massive size and earthy palette of artist Ryan Burns' eco-collages.